

WE CLAIM:

1. A harvesting aid comprising, in combination:
an elongated conveyor belt; and
a spray chamber station positioned along said elongated conveyor belt;

wherein said spray chamber comprises:

a housing positioned over said elongated conveyor;

a first group of nozzles positioned at a height that is about level with said produce as it travels along said elongated conveyor and oriented so as to spray said produce from a side of said housing inward toward a center of said elongated conveyor belt;

a second group of nozzles positioned at a height that is about level with said produce as it travels along said elongated conveyor and oriented so as to spray said produce from a center of said spray chamber toward said housing; and

a third group of nozzles positioned proximate a top of said housing and oriented so as to spray downward and toward said center of said spray chamber.

2. The harvesting aid of Claim 1 a quality control station positioned along said elongated conveyor belt prior to said washing station.

3. The harvesting aid of Claim 1 wherein said housing has a stainless steel surface.

4. The harvesting aid of Claim 1 further comprising a diverter located at a substantially center portion of said spray chamber proximate a surface of said elongated conveyor and adapted to divert produce to one of two areas within said spray chamber.

5. The harvesting aid of Claim 4 wherein said diverter has a stainless steel surface.

6. The harvesting aid of Claim 1 further comprising a tank, having a microbicide therein, in communication with at least one of said first, second and third group of nozzles.

7. The harvesting aid of Claim 1 further comprising a tank, having a protein therein, in communication with at least one of said first, second and third group of nozzles.

8. The harvesting aid of Claim 1 wherein said third group of nozzles comprises a first sub-group located on one side of said housing and oriented so as to spray toward a middle portion of said spray chamber, and a second sub-group located on a second side of said housing and oriented so as to spray toward said middle of said spray chamber.

9. A harvesting aid comprising, in combination:

- an elongated conveyor belt;
- a quality control station positioned along said elongated conveyor belt prior to said washing station;
- a spray chamber station positioned along said elongated conveyor belt;

wherein said spray chamber comprises:

- a housing positioned over said elongated conveyor;
- wherein said housing has a stainless steel surface;
- a diverter located at a substantially center portion of said spray chamber proximate a surface of said elongated conveyor and adapted to divert produce to one of two areas within said spray chamber;

wherein said diverter has a stainless steel surface.

- a first group of nozzles positioned at about a level of said produce as it travels along said elongated conveyor and oriented to as to spray from a side of said housing inward toward a center of said elongated conveyor belt;
- a second group of nozzles positioned at about a level of said produce as it travels along said elongated conveyor and oriented so as to spray from a center of said spray chamber toward said housing;
- a third group of nozzles positioned proximate a top of said housing and oriented so as to spray downward and toward said center of said spray chamber;

wherein said third group of nozzles comprises a first sub-group located on one side of said housing and oriented so as to spray toward a middle portion of said spray chamber, and a second sub-group located on a second side of said housing and oriented so as to spray toward said middle of said spray chamber;

a first tank, having a microbicide therein, in communication with at least one of said first, second and third group of nozzles; and

a second tank, having a protein therein, in communication with at least one of said first, second and third group of nozzles.

10. A method for washing harvested produce comprising the steps of:

providing a harvesting aid comprising, in combination:

an elongated conveyor belt; and

a spray chamber station positioned along said elongated conveyor belt;

wherein said spray chamber comprises:

a housing positioned over said elongated conveyor;

a first group of nozzles positioned at a height that is about level with said produce as it travels along said elongated conveyor and oriented so as to spray said produce from a side of said housing inward toward a center of said elongated conveyor belt;

a second group of nozzles positioned at a height that is about level with said produce as it travels along said elongated conveyor and oriented so as to spray said produce from a center of said spray chamber toward said housing; and

a third group of nozzles positioned proximate a top of said housing and oriented so as to spray downward and toward said center of said spray chamber;

placing harvested produce on said elongated conveyor belt;

said harvested produce traveling on said elongated conveyor belt through said spray chamber; and

spraying said harvested produce through said first, second and third groups of nozzles.

11. The method of Claim 10 further comprising the steps of:
providing a quality control station positioned along said elongated conveyor belt prior to said washing station; and

conducting a quality control inspection from said quality control station for producing passing along said elongated conveyor belt.

12. The method of Claim 10 wherein said housing has a stainless steel surface.

13. The method of Claim 10 further comprises the steps of:
providing a diverter located at a substantially center portion of said spray chamber proximate a surface of said elongated conveyor; and

said diverter diverting produce to one of two areas within said spray chamber.

14. The method of Claim 13 wherein said diverter has a stainless steel surface.

15. The method of Claim 1 further comprising the steps of:
providing a tank, having a microbicide therein, in communication with at least one of said first, second and third group of nozzles; and

spraying said microbicide through said first, second and third groups of nozzles.

16. The method of Claim 1 further comprising the steps of providing a tank, having a protein therein, in communication with at least one of said first, second and third group of nozzles; and spraying said protein through said first, second and third groups of nozzles.

17. The method of Claim 1 wherein said third group of nozzles comprises a first sub-group located on one side of said housing and oriented so as to spray toward a middle portion of said spray chamber, and a second sub-group located on a second side of said housing and oriented so as to spray toward said middle of said spray chamber.

18. The method of Claim 10 further comprising the steps of:
coring said produce prior to placing it on said elongated conveyor belt; and

positioning said cored produce on said elongated conveyor belt on a side of said produce, so that a butt end of said produce is located proximate an edge of said elongated conveyor belt and a top portion of said produce is located proximate an interior portion of said elongated conveyor belt.